

The syndrome, now acceptably designated 'Sudden infant death syndrome' (SIDS), relates to those tragic instances when a previously well infant, usually between two and four months, is found dead in its cot (cot death), or is brought dead or dying to hospital. The incidence of this approaches 2.5 per 1,000 births in areas of adequate assessment, and the practitioner may at any time have such a tragedy in his practice. From this book he will learn much of the theories, discarded or still tenable, which have been proposed to explain these cases. If he reads critically he will appreciate that very real progress is being made, especially since the first conference in 1963. While no answer to the problem is available, both the papers and discussions contain valuable suggestions, and both pathologists and paediatricians may be surprised by how much information, some of it perhaps valuable in other contexts, they will find as the discussion ranges widely.

Prominent among the papers presented were three by Professor Peter Froggart and one by Dr. T. K. Marshall recording work done in Northern Ireland, and these representatives from Belfast contributed in a valuable way to the discussion. It is hoped that the next number of this Journal will carry a more detailed report of these important investigations in this province.

J.E.M.

INFANT FEEDING. By Mavis Gunther. (Pp. xiv+112; illustrated. £1.25). London: Methuen, 1970.

OVER four-fifths of this book is devoted to a consideration of the physiology, management, advantages and difficulties of breast feeding – a reflection of the importance the author attaches to this form of infant feeding. Few would disagree with the views expressed though the suggestion on page 4 that sudden unexplained death is less likely to occur if infants are breast fed is not supported by the recent Northern Ireland study of cot deaths.

Though a devotee of breast feeding, Dr. Gunther is by no means a slavish, intolerant advocate of this mode of infant feeding. Her considerable experience gained from thirty years' study of the subject is evident in the authoritative, sympathetic, practical and common-sensical manner with which she deals with her subject. Though the book is intended primarily as a guide for expectant and nursing mothers, it could be read with advantage by all who have to advise mothers both before and after the birth of their babies, for, as the author so rightly emphasises, "... where there *are* difficulties in the first days of feeding from the breast, success or failure depends largely on the knowledge and understanding of the attendant and seldom on the mother or baby."

I.J.C.

WILL PICKLES OF WENSLEYDALE. By John Pemberton. (Pp. 224; illustrated; £2.50). London: Geoffrey Bles, 1970.

WILL PICKLES worked as a general practitioner in the Yorkshire Dales for over half a century, but he was no ordinary man. His career began inauspiciously with failure in his M.B. examination but he subsequently gained many honours, culminating in his election, near the end of his life, as F.R.C.P. London.

In the course of a busy country practice his persistent enquiry led him to unravel many problems of the spread of infective disease and he earned a world-wide reputation as a practical epidemiologist after the publication of his book, "Epidemiology in Country Practice". His fame stands with that of Jenner, Budd and Mackenzie and his keen perception combined with "Continuity of Observation" led to his outstanding contributions to our knowledge of infective hepatitis, Bornholm disease and many other infectious conditions.

After the Second World War Pickles travelled extensively throughout the world, but the story of these journeys does not hold the reader's attention so keenly as the fascinating description of medical practice and country life in the early part of the twentieth century.

In the later part of the book the description of the many honours showered on Will Pickles, and his happy association with the Royal College of General Practitioners ensures the happy ending which is desirable in any tale. Professor Pemberton has produced a biography of outstanding interest, worthy of comparison with "The Beloved Physician".

K.F.